

The Final Compilation

By
John A. Garza

UT - USN
2017

On the occasion of my realization, at a rueful seventy, that the “waiting to be born” had been the thing itself all along and that now it’s needed for the tree to be a fast growing one if I’m to avail myself of any of its shade and blooms.

J.A.G.
July 28, 2017

Contents

Number Sequence	5
Selected Poems & Songs	7
Compilation	33

Number Sequence

Discerned by

John A. Garza

In 1961 at Age Fourteen

A.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
2 4 6 8 1 3 5 7 9
3 6 9 3 6 9 3 6 9
5 1 6 2 7 3 8 4 9
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 9
4 8 3 7 2 6 1 5 9
3 6 9 3 6 9 3 6 9
7 5 3 1 8 6 4 2 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 9
9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

B.

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 9
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 9
7 5 3 1 8 6 4 2 9
6 3 9 6 3 9 6 3 9
4 8 3 7 2 6 1 5 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
5 1 6 2 7 3 8 4 9
6 3 9 6 3 9 6 3 9
2 4 6 8 1 3 5 7 9
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 9
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 9

C.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
1 2 3 ...

Selected
Poems & Songs

An Audio Pamphlet

Accompaniments Being
Musical Compositions
From the
Public Domain

By
John A. Garza

UT-USN

Poetry © 1976
This version self-published 2008

Dedication
Most obviously, to
My parents and two sisters.
If only the depth of my appreciation
were so obvious.

Contents

Prelude	10
Track 1	
Overture in Prose	11
Track 2	
It is a second story kitchen window	13
Track 3	
Grandmother	14
Track 4	
To Mary	15
Track 5	
Ubi sunt	16
Track 6	
Four Vestiges	
I found a vestige of regret	17
I spent my life	17
This first night	18
Something passed between us	18
Track 7	
Vietnam Ships	
It takes little of unknown	19
As eons flew	20
A lighted temple in the night	21
“Oh, yes,” he remembered	22

Track 8

Mozart in Vietnam

Gauging the land	. . . . .	23
Among the things	. . . . .	24
Ten days is the limit to infinity	. . . . .	24
Voices resonating	. . . . .	25

Track 9

Hippies in Mexico

I went to all the places	. . . . .	26
You were my fling with many things	. . . . .	27

Track 10

Nietzsche, Stendhal

I who will not have a son	. . . . .	27
Break into my reality	. . . . .	28
It is never so far	. . . . .	28
I dreamt a lovely thing once.	. . . . .	29

Track 11

Farewells

How should I count the days	. . . . .	30
So this is how it ends	. . . . .	31

Prelude

Dear Listener,

Please accept my ... no, no. Please be warned that what you will hear is imperfect in many ways: The sound ... no, no.

It would not be true to apologize for or to ask you to excuse what you might hear here because the simplest alternative would be not to force it on you in the first place.

Clearly, I crave your indulgence: The sound is scratchy from vinyl phonographs and distorted from cassette tape. The voice is nasally and flat. The performance contains trippings of the tongue. It was all done in a laughably amateurish way: Putting a needle down on vinyl for the music, pressing Record on a cassette, saying the things in a rush, pausing the tape, lifting the needle. Pages rustling, clock chiming.

And most of all, it is not for everyone. Rude ears are likely to signal the mouth to ridicule. Yet it has its recommendations: An open hearted disclosure of self as to a friend.

So I supplicate you to consider it a homespun visit between you and me, in which your valued understanding outweighs the imperfections of my offering.

J. A.G.
October 30, 2008

Track 1

Overture in Prose

[Music, Rachmaninoff, from Sonata in B-flat Minor, Op. 36: Allegro molto (3rd Movement). Pianist Vladimir Horowitz.]

At an ebb. Isolated. Reaching out continues. Involvement is messy. As ever, those few who are potentially capable of a Renaissance friendship prefer the safety of a bourgeois value system. The too available ones are not deep enough. In this age true worth is on the run. Running scared. Compare *Rhinoceros*, play by Ionesco, about the turning of the mob. The stampede of, and to, the herd.

Vantage cigarettes, Miller Lite beer, petty bureaucratic job a la Dostoevski's *Underground Man*. Aging parents who did the very best they could, which was quite a lot, unappreciated at the time. The travails of moving from the point of being unknowing to the point of knowing too late, storming bastions that, once taken, are found to have been abandoned long before. The goal has been to simplify. The result: Complication, desperation, isolation. The ideal has been love. The realization, that love must be discovered, not invented.

And then there are those other urges: Fatalism, art. With Stendhal and Nietzsche came art in life, or life as material. I see art everywhere and other people as objects *of* art. Only people interest me really, because they each carry the X factor, unknown and potentially beautiful in them. Thus I prefer portraits, faces, eyes.

Material goods fascinate me only in the absence of people, in my solitariness. I contemplate the grip of the human hand in everything I see, whether the most common of manufactured goods or the most sincere attempts at high art or the abstractions of the mind — games, philosophies, and other metaphysics.

Every brick in the bank, and every shingle in the rudest shack was laid by a man's hand. Human care attends every last detail. Do you scoff at the pattern on a dime store dinner plate?

Admire it, rather, as you would the artifacts of Praxilites. Are you in awe of a magnificently engineered structure? Wonder, rather, at the stepping stone somebody removed to a muddy crossing, for there is reason and foresight and attention in it.

Every wire that is strung, every road, every structure, every tangible change in the natural face, bears the human fingerprint. And every rule of conduct bears the human *mind* print. And every person that I see around me is sharing this mysterious and unasked-for experience of life with me.

And when the obituaries in the newspaper occasionally carry a picture, with the eyes staring straight out, usually with intimations of their mortality dully glinting, I notice!

A philosophy professor once scorned the daily newspaper as an example of the fleeting and trivial issues that are considered by the herd in lieu of the permanent questions. But he was wrong to scorn. The daily newspaper celebrates the triumphs, castigates the scandals, satirizes the follies, and mourns the passing of man. Is not this the function of philosophy? Elephants scatter the bones of their dead.

The night: When the earth more obviously displays itself in its natural mystery. Inward of the ship at sea the slumbering men more obviously display their natural trust.

Track 2

[Music, Fernando Sor, Op. 6, Study No. 2. Guitarist Andres Segovia. A lonely
rooming house, first go round in Austin, Texas, before the Navy.]

It is a second-story kitchen window
I look out of on the closing of the evening
as I drink a glass of water.

Little dramas are playing out there
beyond the trees, behind the lighted window screens
in the houses of the city, on land anywhere,
and other places —

That is the thought
that comes to mind somehow
from a static and untragic scene.

But the water comes about like a most high answer,
bewilderingly sore to be without,
unsolicitously killing to have supreme:

Cool, colorless, and filling
without a taste of anything

04-27-1967

Track 3

[Music, Fernando Sor, Op. 6, Study No. 11. Guitarist Andres Segovia. Literal description and details of the persons and of my grandparents' house in Brownsville, Texas, very like old New Orleans. In the audio, misspeaking of "sidewalk section."]

Grandmother

For six weeks
you were blind with cataracts
while the doctors, younger than your sons,
huddled over you in their barber's chair.
There was your age to be considered in a corner ...
One gravitated like a danseur
goosestepping towards the sleeping princess.
You *heard* his touch. He thumbed an eyelid up,
leaving a smudge ...

Mother ruddered you by both arms from behind
until the heels of medium height
you would not, even then, forego
struck the sidewalk section with Grandfather's
name in block letters. Then you said,
"All right, let *me*."
You assumed your mahogany rocker,
your bird breast quieting.

After an overnight trip home
Mother walked in already talking,
set some groceries on the round
wooden table, turned, and saw
your face
lighted by the ceiling-high
windows, your hands upraised to guide a kiss.

10-20-1973

Track 4

[Music, Debussy, Girl with the Flaxen Hair. Guitarist Andrés Segovia.
Literal events of the cotton picking process on Daddy's little 24 acres.]

To Mary

Or, Cottonpicking According to
G. M. Hopkins, S. J.

You, who have not known my love, suspect
Yourself internal machined picked, racked, pressed,
And gin lint baled, stacked on a flatbed truck.

Mais non. I, the plow shear share, care,
Care you to ridge heave flowers white green,
The pure plugs pulled-of pop! Plop-pop! Pop!

Sigh breathing, my wide arms face down, sinking I,
Trailer fenced, boll tossed, roll over and dig deep,
Soft on soft, fill-full harvest daubed.

09-17-1973

Track 5
[Music, Tchaikovsky, None But the Lonely Heart.]

Ubi Sunt

Though formed to ease myself in friendship, friendships ease
and I am left, my chair perched on the precipice
of my porch, to watch patterns of smoke and late night crowds.

The people barely pause to look away, afraid
of missing an event that *must* lie around
the next corner — or —

With feet propped on a planter
I thinly breathe an arc of smoke beyond the glare
of headlamps, thinking, “I am dead,” and let my neck
recline my head upon the straight back of the chair.

My friends number the stars in a starless, starless night.

10-09-1975

Track 6

Four Vestiges

[Music, Bach, from French Suite, No. 5 in G Major, Sarabande.]

I found a vestige of regret to let a valued moment pass
when affinity
could have recovered coming weeks in afterglow
because we understood and were not alone ...

But receptionists grow weary; my lease runs out.
Raskilnikov made terms with God and man:
I can't now,
and no man can ...

03-08-1967

I spent my life in waiting to be born.
They said —

“Take years for certain limbs to grow,
and years for other faculties;
take years for this, my errand,
and that, my convenience,
that you may know what I had been
but for the years I cared to spend in other ways.
And, careful! You may die along the way!”

And careful: You may die along the way ...

03-10-1967

This first night
of forty years of nights to come:
A long way on the make.
Lie still, do not admit a thought.
The light, half cast,
has made marble of a foot.
Eternity is dripping
underneath the night life and the day.

04-28-1967

Something passed between us
though we never spoke ...

Thirty times or fifty times
the air was filled with talk as though with smoke
and we, too, talked among the rest,
but thirty times or fifty times
something passed between us
though we never spoke.

Now the group dispersed that,
pulled in talk together,
had ostracized the universe that
had the while fought back with time:
The band disbands.

Now the night lies hot and heavy,
now I'm naked on my muggy bed,
now the last is at an end —
We do not speak, we never did — —
though something passes now as it did
ever thirty times or fifty times before:

Why — — are we — apart??

05-18-1967

Track 7

Vietnam Ships

[Unidentified music. The “lighted temples” are Navy ships, my own and others, anchored out in the wide rivers in the Mekong Delta. “Impellined” is an artificial word (my apologies for this), a cross between something ongoing yet parts of which are past. “Smoking stars in drifting death” refers to the flares shot up into the night sky by the Army, which hovered/floated up there, like steady fireworks with a plume/”tail” of smoke, lighting up the ground, for night vision of the terrain.]

It takes little of unknown
to make a pool that swirls and thereby drowns —
This much we know somehow,
and little else,
besides that it helps
to strew barricades about,
which should be big on height
if they are to be of any use at all,
since seeing over them
(and therefore knowing they are barricades)
is fearsome and disaffiliates them
their purpose, etc.

10-08-1967

As eons flew heedlessly by
and I
lay preternaturally asleep,
so will we each again
when, unraveled they from me,
this accord of

slow

damn

slow

is dissipated and each escapes this hovering
hotly gaseous and inert.

Meantime — let me lay siege
to the citadel of Tomorrow
wherein, I sense,
my spirit lies enthralled
in the throes of misconstrued obligation
crying, “Slow, damn — slow!”

11-14-1967

A lighted temple in the night
riding, baublelike, a breast,
casts a rippling ladder
in my sight of fog and phantom crossinged
access I would overleap, despite ...

It cannot be, it cannot be ...

I climb aboard a blackened lily frond
helplessly impelling in the carousel
of water plants on greasened gears:

And all you stately pilgrims, sink or promenade —
Gather up and dump your graspless tendrils

Dead in the water
Dead in the water
Dead, dead ...

01-03-1968

“Oh, yes,” he remembered.
It came to me
like a chain on the neck.
I knew how long I had
and set myself
that hardest task — — to wait —
 one and lonely
 one and lonely:
My year only started
when you left ...

“No, no,” he rebutted.
That doesn’t make sense.
I could not wait to stand
these silent hours
and, therefore, dead — —
Dead, dead, dead —
 a single bullet through the head
 a single bullet through the head
Dead dead dead — — and then —
and *then* — — and *then*, again —

How many times
has it returned
to me to say, “If only
I had — — died—
that night, the night
 I talked to God —
 I — talked — to — — God!”
And He replied,
“A moderately sincere gesture.”

So I would hide —
but night turned day
by the light of smoking stars
 in drifting death
 in drifting death
displaying land, alike
dismissing trees for twigs,
pinning me naked to one single spot of earth
where I gain a stake — — in death —

Track 8

Mozart in Vietnam

[Music, Mozart, from Exsultate, Jubilate: Alleluja. Vietnam again. Describing one of our main activities on the ship, standing Watch (what the Army calls “Guard” duty). “hordes of smoke tailed eyes” are the flares again, this time watching “gory spitting,” meaning the TRACERS lighting across the night sky. “Voices resonating” is now at the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas, with huge, empty barracks on the base, after Vietnam, but the “alien land” is still Vietnam.]

Gauging the land where
cleavage spoke to
risen night seeking
its own level,
stinking money,
the sentinel yawns ...

Hordes of smoke-tailed eyes
watch on gory spitting above

He presides
focused on a fog
innards ticking
register far off shocks —
the barge on a river
unmoved of swells

He falls
he chews his own hot glue
open — at — up —
form of the fallen:
To rise anew presiding,
yawning, ticking,
tocked, ticked ...

09-25-1968

Among the things
I never shall forget,
when finished deeds
have filled my mind
with vacancies and smoke,
that night of yours will last —

The night that you were drunk
and we were courtly,
trading one for one
of one another's packs
of cigarettes and dreams,
amid discoveries that,
beyond control or choice,
our destinies were one ...

10-01-1968

Ten days is the limit to infinity,
Twenty suns of up and down,
false progeny to that black sky,
shant set their ways around
before some kidded mortal split
his throat just for the gush of it
or take just one too many a step
on alien land studded with mines.

01-12-1969

Voices resonating down possessed corridors
speak a sense of beginning,
of youth, strength, and the sure hand —
suspending in a transforming din the penury
of logic, the stalking vision,
life's maiming touch.

01-16-1972

Track 9

Hippies in Mexico

[Music, Cielito Lindo. After the Navy, my second round in Austin, Texas. A very fringe taste of playing at being a Hippie.]

I went to all the places we
had talked about —

The feria at Oaxaca was
less lively for me
than we had expected;

the hammocks at Tehuantepec
were dimmer of color
and weaker of construction;

Puerto Escondido was
quite *un*-hidden;

the volcanoes were outshone
by the train's reading lights
reflected in the windows;

the American hippies were
only slightly less Ugly
than their parents in their day.

I slept in camión stations
and in flipback seats with
metal rungs for arch supports —

on the way to all the places
we might have been.

07-28-75

You were my fling with your many
things: With mysticism, vitamins,
a little weed, less L. S. D.,
rustic clothes, and old Ford vans,
communal meals, and welfare rolls,
how to talk and how to act,
I Ching, yoga, natural foods,
thumbing rides in Mexico,
long hair, beards, and wooden flutes.

08-??-1975

Track 10

Stendhal, Nietzsche

[Music, Puccini, from Madame Butterfly, One Fine Day.]

I who will not have a son
Sing to that son,
Out of the green beaming sun:

Nietzsche, Sophocle, Bizet,
Berlioz, Eschyle,
Blake, Dostoevski, Chopin ...

Shakespeare, Bellini, Stendhal,
Bach, Euripide,
Homere, Montaigne, Debussy.

I who will not have a son
Sing to that son
Out of the green beaming sun.

10-26-1973

Break into my reality.
It ought not to be strange to you.
It is no stranger you will meet there.
For my reality is you.
My reality also is me.
And you will see, you will see:
That neither am I a stranger.

06-09-1975

It is never so far
that I can outrun
this flapjack horizon
expanse of earth.

This place or any other
is interchangeable, the other with the one.
The domain of my species is measured
in eyelengths to the sun.

My hair is my clothes and my adornment;
my voice is my music;
my hand is my friend and my helper;
my earth is my home.

In my hair I am clothed and adorned;
by my voice do I sing myself;
through my hand I am befriended;
of my earth I am sheltered and nourished.

I am the universe and cannot escape myself.
The fact that I *am* is the barrier.

08-??-1975

I dreamt a lovely thing once
and woke the more amazed
to find it in components
about me in easy reach,
like the segments of ruined columns.

I laughed triumphantly.
It seemed an easy thing to
assemble the game of Life
into a Big Win.

Reality, too, seems ...

09-06-1975

Track 11

Farewells

[Music, Bizet, from Carmen, *La fleur que tu m'avais jetée.*]

How should I count the days since you've been gone?
By packs of cigarettes? By quarts of beer?
By books unread? By movies half unseen?
By letters written, letters unreceived?
By packs? By quarts? By bags of packs and quarts?

I flick a burst of ashes o'er my head,
Each bit of it a day's ascent — and plumb:
The haul of days, the rubble of conviction.

But day by day I struck my own departure
from nine parts of despair and one, resolve.
The ratio muddled, settled in my beer,
despair enstaled and resolution closed:

I might have chosen many; I chose you.
For you contain the Many, One, and Few.

05-19-1975

So this is how it ends.
This Siamese twinned entity-of-you-and-me
 ends
in a tearing of flesh —

Was it-that-we-were
such a monster?
Is so unmerciful a wrenching apart
so very necessary?

Everything unto this raw pain
was ours as one,
but *your* pain
will numb you to your separate health,
for *your* portion enbargained
all the vital organs.

09-24-1975

Compilation

By
John A. Garza

UT - USN

Contents

The Nest, until September 1965.	35
Austin UT First Round, 1965 - 1967.	39
Navy, 1967 - 1971.. . . .	52
Austin UT Second Round, 1971-1975?	58
End/The Final Compilation	81

The Nest, until September 1965

“There’s no place like home.”

Mother:

“The more you do, the more you can do.”

“Do the hardest part first.”

“Everybody has their little irritating traits. So do you!”

“Everything passes out of fashion. People do, too.”

“Stop trying to be perfect. It keeps you from doing anything. Do what you can, and keep going.”

Daddy:

On driving a car (or something), “Stay on the right side of that line in the middle.”

Me

For most of my life I was mistaken in ruing not having had constant hand-holding, micro-managing, mentoring that supposedly would have reaped glory for me along the lines of historical greatness. Too late in life, I now believe that, for one thing, said suffocating guidance results in either dependence or rebellion. As for the rest, instead of deprecating what was handed down, one can appreciate what there was of it more when compared to one's own hard won realizations, with their appearance of unheard of originality.

Let a leaf fall from a bough of a tree,
Let the leaf wither and die;
It will brown, writhe, become nothing to see,
While the tree will grow higher, on high.

06-02-1964

Death comes lurking at my window;
Death leaps out from on my tree;
Death leers, longing for the seeds I sow;
Death comes chasing after me.

07-21-1964

There is a place where quiet dwells,
Where peace transcends the thought of strife;
And music swells and makes memories
Of life outside depart.

The pungent air verily stings
The spirit awake from that sleep
Of every day, while voices sing:
That place! Away, my heart!

08-31-1964

I am a paper tiger
Whose written roar quite deafens;
But when flesh become I on the floor,
My spoken roar quite lessens.

10-27-1964

At times I soar at mountains' heights;
At others, interest's daunted.
Composed am I of depths and flights —
Just call me dilettante.

11-03-1964

Of life's sandy beaches I am but a grain
Just lost in the masses — no stature, no name.
Yet pierce the earth's reaches in search the earth's crown —
The rock truth to build on, your castle to found —
And the search so far futile will thus but remain,
And the truth so long sought for will, too, but the same.
For the bases of life are the stretches of tan —
The basis of life is the mere shifting sand.

11-16-1964

Schizophrenic is the world
By nature of its parts:
Lizards, minks — peacocks unfurled,
Bats hanging — psalms and Sartres.

12-26-1964

There is for me no tying rock;
No safe harbor at which to dock;
All society's painted tan —
Composed is it of shifting sand.

02-28-1965

Strung out are we like Christmas lights
In interstellar space —
Just colored glass in bits blown free,
To shine and then to dim.

03-13-1965

Mine is not the fate of kings
Nor the dullness of the hordes;
Not to live for worldly things
Nor be bound by common cords.

In time this is my special niche
But once with value filled;
It is of essence deep and rich
When, after labor, tilled.

So live will I in torrent's rush
With mind on thoughts sublime;
With heaven's club all foes to crush
The heights are mine to climb.

I am a star torn out the sky —
In brilliance shine, in flame to die.

03-30-1965

Austin UT First Round, 1965 - 1967

Adrift, lost, unprepared even to prepare via “higher education” - just reading novels amid the most superficial delusion of intellectuality, along the lines of movie and book criticism in popular weekly magazines.

Looking back, the reality of these first two years out of the nest was the loss of individuality versus a mass population campus. And Austin was a city, but the campus was the real town, and I was even further self-imprisoned in a tiny rented room, my bastion against the impending encroachment of the larger world outside, the dread of finding out how large it was, day by day ever larger.

In those beginnings of Austin hippies, as Austin always lags to keep up with national trends, I wasn't a proto-hippie, wasn't protesting the Vietnam war. Was a waif, mildly malnourished. Stunned at being alone in the ocean of masses of people. Looking at new people never seen before, rich boy Frats partying in Southern plantation, pillared houses on weekends to the tune of “I Can't Get No Satisfaction.” Education, enlightenment, broadening of the mind and soul were not even in the equation. It was all about the pinpoint of Self being overwhelmed in the black hole of many, many others.

The cool of the evening calms my soul
With pristine breaths breaking
The bounds of my clearing,
When certain thick rushes past hearing
Are lost on a sudden numb
Unlooking of mind.

09-04-1965

They prod with convention,
The masters of hell —
 Designed intervention
 Of virtues unwell —
Whose noblest expressions
Would fain to be free
From the worst of depressions
In treatment with thee.

09-07-1965

Nothingness of meaning,
delayed reflex of thought,
proceeds with all of its
sterile pregnancy to
challenge — not just fakeness,
but all — and change nothing.

I never knew Purpose—
neither did I need it —
but the doughish knowledge
of its absence drives me
to uprisings that don't
settle my wilderness.

Every fear that plagued
me yesterday awakes
with me, too, this morning;
but now I may give it
off in poetry, for
genius doesn't matter.

09-28-1965

The Audio Library

Earphones clamped my head together
and, further, plugged me to a wall
to feed me intravenously The Best Part of Man.

[The girl next to me dug into her purse, but I turned away.]

Beethoven came pouring out the wire,
hot as ten Paganinis all freshly aligned
to suit the devil and a shivering me.

[The music blocked all thinking, no matter.]

It made me want to jerk up and yell,
“Hey, everybody! Push button sixteen, y’hear?
Sixteen, listen to number sixteen,” and swoon.

[The librarian would have bounced me.]

But no other block had ears just then;
too stuck on other currents
to share my understanding — or let me, his.

10-23-1965

To the Lullaby Music of Beethoven’s 6th

The wind blows
The sea rolls
The days and nights go by
And you live
And I live
And someday we will die

02-17-1966

The Bort

Free and hard the bort,
of her greater part,
from her setting's heart
 exacts her due
till his form has lost its art.

Pure her lines and clear,
no shadow trap.
Pass light through: Bent.

Synthetic facets,
usurping mettle to perfectness,
Abandon nought-ring
in scattered light of bits blown free
 And hard the bort.

03-31-1966

I drank
Till the rim of the glass touched the bridge of my nose
And I filled the glass again.

I drank
Till the rim of the glass touched the bridge of my nose
And I filled the glass again.

I drank
Till the rim of the glass touched the bridge of my nose
And I filled the glass again.

I drank
Till my nape touched the back of the chair.

04-14-1966

In Utland

I have traveled out my fixings
of what comfort was about
to be about a duty early
to put a desperate rushing out.

So I am loosed ...
in a wonderland of tame squirrels
and forgettable truths.

I have traveled out my fixings
of what comfort was about
to find out comfort was not stillness:
It was love.

04-18-1966

Oh my life has come to nothing
as winds convulse the tree of leaf
which might have dried alone.

08-20-1966

When I have so wanted a thing
That night-inked shades mat
The great bottom of the sky,
The traffic mumbles out
To one low buzzing tone,
The molding of my blunted weight
Conforms old tented slopes —
And yet the augured pleasure trades
On pressured visions in my brain:

10-20-1966

I saw a shadow walking,
it walked my very stead:
bulbous heels, bell bottom legs —
tiny, tiny head.

02-24-1967

Recuperation lacks a music of excess,
Is spare,
Admits of birds and motors in the air,
And muffles footsteps from assertion.

03-08-1967

It's good you should not know what poetry is —
 I never knew
 and envied you
 when yourself thought you were learned —
or art, or music;
than that words are subject to repeal,
and moods and hues as soon lose life
as silver coins the warmth
my thigh has lent them.

03-08-1967

I found a vestige of regret to let a valued moment pass
when affinity
could have recovered coming weeks in afterglow
because we understood and were not alone ...

But receptionists grow weary; my lease runs out.
Raskilnioy made terms with God and man:
I can't now
and no man can ...

03-08-1967

I watched my towels go round and round —
Oh, look! There's the sweet one with the spot of brown!
They ran a race with the color fasts
And, drawn and drained, emerged at last.

03-08-1967

I spent my life in waiting to be born.
They said —
 "Take years or certain limbs to grow,
 and years or other faculties;
 take years for this, my errand,
 and that, my convenience,
 that you may know what I had been
 but for the years I cared to spend in other ways
 and careful! You may die along the way!"
And careful: You may die along the way ...

03-10-1967

If he has the leisure
to tell us it is hot,
he is an academician
or else he is a sot.

03-14-1967

I raced a paper sailing,
I spied a blackbird bathing,
I felt them being with me:
I spent a charming day.

04-10-1967

Self-conscious generation, self-conscious generation!
Feet could point what other way?
Self-conscious generation, self-conscious generation!
Its feet are pointed splay!

04-18-1967

All right —

I am all for you:
the willow-bends in walking with a hillside,
the rainbows breaking on an eyelash —
but don't speak to me,
don't speak to me —
I won't have you speaking to me
and I'll be all for you
 all for you
 all, all ...

04-23-1967

I have split the water from my heart
and smelled it rancid.
The heart
that was a cyst
is now a sac —
sides insides clinging
where there lacks a space
to love
or die —
A touch can cause contagion.

04-23-1967

He is the best:
That alone
Should do the rest.

04-23-1967

It is a second-story kitchen window
I look out of on the closing of the evening
as I drink a glass of water.

Little dramas are playing out there
beyond the trees, behind the lighted window screens
in the houses of the city, on land anywhere,
and other places —

That is the thought
that comes to mind somehow
from a static and untragic scene.

But the water comes about like a most high answer,
bewilderingly sore to be without,
unsolicitously killing to have supreme:

Cool, colorless, and filling
without a taste of anything.

04-27-1967

This first night
of forty years of nights to come:
A long way on the make.
Lie still, do not admit a thought.
The light, half cast,
has made marble of a foot.
Eternity is dripping
underneath the night life and the day.

04-28-1967

A great love living in me
cannot spring — to wash
or fill new rivers.
I thirst! I thirst!
The wells are covered
with rock!
The wells of rock!

04-01-1967

Looking for handles:
He looks for handles
To treat with us familiarly.
But handles are
What with to deal with us
impersonally.

05-16-1967

Something passed between us
though we never spoke ...

Thirty times or fifty times
the air was filled with talk as though with smoke
and we, too, talked among the rest,
but thirty times or fifty times
something passed between us
though we never spoke.

Now the group dispersed that,
pulled in talk together,
had ostracized the universe that
had the while fought back with time:
The band disbands.

Now the night lies hot and heavy,
now I'm naked on my muggy bed,
now the last is at an end —
We do not speak, we never did — —
though something passes now as it did
ever thirty times or fifty times before:

Why — are we — apart??

05-18-1967

Prolepsis

It's a usual kind of June now — you know —
sun all day, greenery and all —
but also these days
there's this wind's been blowing,
blowing hot, blowing cold —
cool in the mornings, hot in the days, etc.

Woke this morning
with the hands before my face,
not actually touching, just
by the face, between
me and seeing.
(Pleasant feeling that, to feel a
night cooled face tinged with foreign warmth.)

Born again a moment.
A chink among my fingers
let a certain tiny world come through
where there was one of everything done once —
but only one, and once only —

One tree, one bird, one leaf,
one wind blew once,
one thirst, one
time to drink a little dew,
one specialty, one me.

Then the hands came apart
and I knew I'd done it all before
a thousand times a thousand times that
might as well have washed out from the start
for all the trace that's left.

Spiders leave a memory, won't
my blowing hot and blowing cold?
This moment — is — oblivion.

06-11-1967

Navy, 1967 - 1971

In the long view back, the overall conflict in my life has been the Isolated Self vs the outside world. At home I was isolated monklike in a tiny town, but not *of* the town, knowing only the immediate family, school, and church on Sundays. At UT-Austin I was isolated, sequestered against a larger city, the campus as the town within the city. Then came the Navy, on the surface my being confronted by the completely larger World, yet in reality protected by the structure of the military, in the finite crews of two ships, and cut off from the outside world. Despite traveling from San Diego boot camp to Vietnam, stops in Sasebo and Yokosuka; Hong Kong; Subic Bay; Guam – then Seattle, on to stops back to San Diego; Acapulco; the Panama Canal; Guantanamo Bay; Haiti; New Orleans; Mayport; Norfolk; Corpus Christi – despite this seeming expanse of the planet, it was all in the confines of my traveling homes, the ships, amid from 200 to 500 crew members while knowing only the dozen or so of my work group, and knowing the populations we glimpsed only as masses along the way.

News events of the outside world were blanks when they happened, such as the moon landing and the murders in Hollywood. The exception that filtered through was in Guam, where the ship was in dry dock for six weeks and there was a public address system with radio news of the world, and, coming back to the barracks from over-indulging at the base's bar, I heard of the shooting of Robert Kennedy and threw up.

In each stage of life I was protected, sealed off: At home, from the entire world; at campus, from the Vietnam protests; in the Navy, even while in Vietnam, from Vietnam itself. My first year in the military was straight to Vietnam, yet all I knew was the daily life aboard my ship, even when the daily life included the three separate days we were attacked by rockets, once with extensive damage to the ship and at least one serious casualty. And we fired back, just to be clear, if it must be said. But as I said to the Army soldier whose unit we were transporting from their previous land battle to their next one, "Are you in the same Vietnam *I'm* in?"

And I was unaware even of my family's civilian experience. I had no idea that their daily life revolved around the television evening news of the horrors of the fighting, and was surprised when I arrived home between ships to see a wall sized map of Vietnam on the kitchen wall, where they had plotted the places I named in my letters. Even twenty or thirty years later, it impressed me when my sister told me how they had prayed intensely and intensively to Saint Jude for my safety and how my plane home arrived on the Saint's feast day.

And my mental environment continued closed and protected. Since Vietnam was my first year, I had three more years, not only away from Vietnam, but still away from the national drama playing out of civilian protests and veterans returning to hostility at home. I had enlisted, to begin with, because of my personal, not from the national, circumstances. As U. S. Representative Charlie Rangel said many years later, the reason that minorities were disproportionately seen in the military was the economics of unattainable education and employment.

It takes little of unknown
to make a pool that swirls and thereby drowns —
This much we know somehow,
and little else,
besides that it helps
to strew barricades about,
which should be big on height
if they are to be of any use at all,
since seeing over them
(and therefore knowing they are barricades)
is fearsome and disaffiliates them
their purpose, etc.

10-08-1967

As eons flew heedlessly by
and I
lay preternaturally asleep,
so will we each again
when, unraveled they from me,
this accord of
 slow
 damn
 slow
is dissipated and each escapes this hovering
hotly gaseous and inert.

Meantime — let me lay siege
to the citadel of Tomorrow
wherein, I sense,
my spirit lies enthralled
in the throes of misconstrued obligation
crying, “Slow — damn — slow!”

11-14-1967

A lighted temple in the night
riding, baublelike, a breast,
casts a rippling ladder
in my sight of fog and phantom crossinged
access I would overleap, despite ...

It cannot be, it cannot be ...

I climb aboard a blackened lily frond
helplessly impelling in the carousel
of water plants on greasened gears:

And all you stately pilgrims, sink or promenade —
Gather up and dump your graspless tendrils
 Dead in the water
 Dead in the water
 Dead, dead ...

01-03-1968

With water from the river
I have washed
Away the clay that lay in layers
As in paintings paintings hang
And are themselves painted over —

Human after human
Have I deified
 With water from the river:
 With water from the river
I have made a god on god ...

Now I lay parchinged
In piles of flakes and chips and clay
Mute and crying to my gods,
Unsuccored by
My gods revelling
 With water from the river
 With water from the river

01-04-1968

“Oh, yes,” he remembered.
It came to me
like a chain on the neck.
I knew how long I had
and set myself
that hardest task — to wait —
 one and lonely
 one and lonely:
My year only started
when you left ...

“No, no,” he rebutted.
That doesn’t make sense.
I could not wait to stand
these silent hours
and therefore dead —
Dead, dead, dead —
 a single bullet through the head
 a single bullet through the head
Dead, dead, dead — — and then —
And *then* — and *then*, again —

How many times
has it returned
to me to say, If only
I had — — died—
that night, the night
 I talked to God —
 I— talked— to— — God!
And He replied,
“A moderately sincere gesture.”

So I would hide —
But night turned day
by the light of smoking stars
 in drifting death
 in drifting death
displaying land, alike
dismissing trees for twigs,
pinning me naked to one single spot of earth
where I gain a stake — in death—

01-22-1968

Gauging the land where
cleavage spoke to
risen night seeking
its own level,
stinking money,
the sentinel yawns ...

Hordes of smoke-tailed eyes
watch on gory spitting above

He presides
focused on a fog
Innards ticking
register far off shocks.—
the barge on a river
unmoved of swells.

He falls
he chews his own hot glue
open — at — up —
form of the fallen:
To rise anew presiding,
yawning, ticking,
tocked, ticked

09-25-1968

Among the things
I never shall forget,
when finished deeds
have filled my mind
with vacancies and smoke,
that night of yours will last —

The night that you were drunk
and we were courtly,
trading one for one
of one another's packs
of cigarettes and dreams,
amid discoveries that,
beyond control or choice,
our destinies were one ...

10-01-1968

Ten days is the limit to infinity,
twenty suns of up and down
false progeny to that black sky
shant set their ways around
before some kidded mortal split
his throat just for the gush of it
or take just one too many a step
on alien land studded with mines

01-12-1969

Austin UT Second Round, 1971 - 1975?

The Slippery, Sleazy 1970s. The Navy's parting gifts to me were extractions of the wisdom teeth, a Good Conduct Medal, and the G. I. Bill, which I took back to pick up where I had left off at UT-Austin. The Navy doctor performing the exit physical asked which school I was headed for, and when I told him with idealized pride, he said playfully, "Why do you want to go to that party school?!" But there was more. I was returning with the same lack of career goals, but now with a secure financial base, without the booby trap that my civilian co-scholars fell into — namely, future crushing student loan debts. Years later I concluded that my military service had been a form of indentured servitude.

And I was seeing an Austin much different from the first time. It was larger and the growth was increasingly ugly. The old pretenses of class status and idealist hippie protest were being replaced by the new pretenses of spiritual fads. The crowds of students were more swarmlike in the anonymity. The fraternity people had lost sheen and were challenged by the democratic mob, the hippies splitting into Yuppies who accepted reality and worked and Street People who didn't, both enveloped in material and spiritual hedonism and hair stylings. I had seen the beginnings of Jesus Freaks in 1969 on the Liberty Boat from my anchored ship to San Diego, where a shipmate with pimples and thick glasses crouched over his Bible and I thought, "Why don't you look UP at the gorgeous creations of your God — the stunningly blue water and sky, fish and fowl free — instead of worming yourself into that book?!"

Well, Austin in the 1970s extended the partying that used to be booze-based now to other chemicals, and, on a socially fluid predicate, with party themes of Scientology, other cults, pop psychology, health foods, vitamins, and boutique work outs. The political idealism had been killed off by the assassinations, Vietnam, and Nixon, and was being replaced by a loosening and inclusiveness — tinged with cynicism, grit, and hardness. The core of actually serious students was covered over by us frivolous, lost ones being "flaky." Without knowing what I was seeing were a couple of Chinese students in my rooming house, older men, smoking cigarettes like fiends, sitting on the front steps in their undershirts while their cooking stank up the house, hunched and engrossed over their cardboard box trays of mysterious computer punch cards. If only I had known they were the future.

There I was, still too stunted by my decent family upbringing to go too far in experimentation with anything, majoring in English Lit and History, watching Gilligan's Island, oblivious about how to sustain a lifetime ahead. And the byword, for my contemporaries (not for me) was how great it was in Austin, and they kept coming and staying in Austin, not coming to study, swelling it up like a tick. And, yes, I stayed for two degrees, really only belaying life decisions via my G. I. Bill to its exhaustion, until I knew, unlike the couple of my hippie acquaintances, that I had to leave because I had to work for the rest of my life. One said, "You can't go back! That's the Third World!" I said, "You're supposed to come here to study then go back where you came from or go somewhere else!"

Voices resonating down possessed corridors
speak a sense of beginning,
of youth, strength and the sure hand —
suspending in a transforming din the penury
of logic, the stalking vision,
life's maiming touch.

01-16-1972

If I were a louse in your shag
My soul would ease and expand;
Gently would I nibble and nip,
Sweetly would I tipple and sip —
My soul would ease and expand
If I were a louse in your shag.

02-??-1973

The Saga of Igor Utlander (Alias, Ego B. Fearful)

House of mighty Igor Utlander, omniscient,
omnipotent, arrogant,
provincial, parochial Igor, who says,
 "I'm O.K. No telling
 about the other guy: Is he
 a fag, a freak,
 an alki, a frat,
 a shorthair, a redneck,
 a liberal, a narc,
 a conservative, a hard-hat,
 an easy rider, a straight —
 or — something I'm too scared to
 dream up yet!"

House of every-man-a-Stranger — untouchable,
 outsider ...
 House of a dozen petty fearings, suspicionings,
 Misgivings, mistrusting ...
 House of scarce facts, small experience, less learning ...
 Yet — blanket: Assumings, supposing,
 imaginings, rumor-mongerings, and judgings ...
 House of unhearing, unseeing peepings,
 frownings, lurkings,
 scurryings, slammings, and unlaughings
 that taint instead of cleansing ...
 House of jungle groupy, savage cliquey, animal fear ...

 Igor Utlander! What have you learned — you
 last, best ape?
 Have you heard of Montaigne? He was an old
 codger, Sixteenth Century,
 and, not being a Modern Man — lucky him —
 he said: “I am a man; I consider
 nothing human alien to me.”
 Or Donne, Seventeenth Century, who said: “Send not
 to know for whom the bell tolls;
 it tolls for thee.”

 When Donne, Montaigne, & Co., make it big
 (Playboy Interview),
 look out, world! All the nineteen year olds will
 git ejicated then ...

 In the meantime, tell me this:
 Is it — the hair, the clothes, the voice, the
 looks, the name, the past, the cough,
 the doings or undoings, the walk,
 or — worse — the fact he dares you
 think on what you do —
 What part of a man makes him, not humankind like you but:
 pissless, shitless, laughless, loveless, friendless,
 unsuffering, undying *stranger*?????

07-03-1973

To Mary
Or, Cottonpicking According to
G. M. Hopkins, S. J.

You, who have not known my love, suspect
Yourself internal machine picked, racked, pressed,
And gin lint baled, stacked on a flatbed truck.

Mais non. I, the plow shear share, care,
Care you to ridge-heave flowers white-green,
The pure plugs pulled-of plop! Plop-pop! Pop!

Sigh breathing, my wide arms face down, sinking, I,
Trailer fenced, boll-tossed, roll over and dig deep,
Soft on soft, fill-full harvest daubed.

09-17-1973

The Love Song of T. S. Eliot

I lie abed with turned up feet, and calves
along the wetted spot the bath towel spread.

Tomorrow I must work. I must. I must.

Last night it was the Chinese students turned
a scratching blast next door with marching songs.
Tonight the old man viewer overhead
has a cloak-and-femme turned on and on.

Work. Work. Tomorrow I must work.

My undershorts are clean but turned wrong
side out. And let there be a ban on games:
No wasting cigarettes, illusory poems,
half hours smudged with newsprint turned, adjust-
ments of the thermostat, wired Berlioz fresh
from Bernstein, hopes that callers will turn up.

I must. I must tomorrow work.

I must believe that I believe, make up the rules:
A beer a day, a well turned phrase, correct
a classmate's misconception about Nietzsche
(a just return to him and Blake for all
that joy and freedom they turned me over),
become a cause, decide on who to be,
and certainly if nothing else resolve
that Tuesday be the day to turn in laundry.

I must, must work tomorrow. Work. Work;

It's very late. The aged man upstairs
turned off his viewer long before the Chinese
alarm was set. He curses in his sleep.
A siren out of doors, turned out for blood,
is frenzied by its fate. The flashlight dims,
and crickets turn the atmosphere to ash.

It takes a lot of thought to stop a thought.
Too late: Tomorrow won't be fine for work.

10-02-1973

I have heard knell
a shipboard bell
the hours on a glass-blue sea.

And I have heard yell
sailors, swabbies, and swells
with pitching 'twixt fish and fowl free.

Oft' have had quell'd
my sun-sweat smell
by salt spray — bare, burned back to lee.

Have let alone dwell
a green-eyed belle
as I skipped to my 'mates with glee.

For I have heard knell
a shipboard bell
the hours on a glass-blue sea.

10-17-1973

Grandmother

For six weeks
you were blind with cataracts
while the doctors, younger than your sons,
huddled over you in their barber's chair.
There was your age to be considered in a corner ...
One gravitated like a danseur
goosestepping towards the sleeping princess.
You *heard* his touch. He thumbed an eyelid up,
leaving a smudge ...

Mother ruddered you by both arms from behind
until the heels of medium height
you would not, even then, forego
struck the sidewalk section with Grandfather's
name in block letters. Then you said,
"All right, let *me*."
You assumed your mahogany rocker,
your bird breast quieting.

After an overnight trip home
Mother walked in already talking,
set some groceries on the round
wooden table, turned, and saw
your face
lighted by the ceiling-high
windows, your hands upraised to guide a kiss.

10-20-1973

I who will not have a son
Sing to that son,
Out of the green beaming sun:

Nietzsche, Sophocle, Bizet
Berlioz, Eschyle,
Blake, Dostoievski, Chopin,

Shakespeare, Tchaikovsky, Stendhal,
Bach, Euripide,
Homere, Montaigne, Debussy.

I who will not have a son
Sing to that son,
Out of the green beaming sun.

10-26-1973

Consciousness is death.
Need I say more?
Consciously,
I do not sing, do not love, do not live.

Life is a convention.
Our heartbeats hurl
Conventions,
By whose grace is possible invention.

Becoming is deceit.
I cannot know,
Becoming,
But that my idée fixe will turn out hellish.

All there is is being.
Body wisdom,
Being,
Impels by blood, nightmare, memory — you name it.
Consciousness is death
Life is a convention
Becoming is deceit
All there is is being

02-02-1974

Two Together

What about this mish mash is there
that might be salvaged when
who knows
what you want from me
much less what I want from you?
To be understood, is that it?
That's good for starters but...
Who knows? This thing of words
snaps every thread of thought
before, during, and after
whatever the heck they really mean —
volatile, constantly shifting between
deleting and recalling,
definitions versus experiences,
sincerity and cynicism —

What's the word for two together:
Dressed in white inside the brightness
of an otherwise empty bus —
wordless, motionless, and staring
into the forward darkness?
Or two together
in seeming indifference
amid their common knowledge
of each other
in every state of minds and bodies?
Two together
huddled over a lab experiment or
a mantled or dismantled motor,
themselves vacating the rest
of the vast containing spaces?
Who of the wordsmen had the words:
Whitman's "adherence" or Lawrence's
"brotherhood" or Yeats' gift
to say they two together had,
"Eaten of the one pot and
shared the one blanket."

What can one know to want
of another when each is indeterminate,
a geodesic persona,
new aspect upon new aspect,
not unto itself, each deepened
trust-facet deepening all others.
Yet all –ologies define “two together”
as rules -- two/rules, together/rules --
and one apart is lethal to it all,
in Albee’s one worthy line,
“People who want to die but don’t do it.”
Bingo.
Futility is a bad trip and it’s
the only trip I’ve got a ticket to,
a terminal disease at the terminal
and catching, no graceful exits,
no looking back.

Anything goes fast.
Anything – goes fast.
Anything goes – fast.

02-05-1974

Song

I’ve tried to leave you
Because I know you
But when I leave you
I know you — and return

I’ve crawled to see you
Turned small to be you
But when I see you
I am you— and return

I’ve tried to hold you
No one can hold you
But when I hold you
I hold you — and return

10-29-1974

Coming to Life

From the low down wrotten
with the done-to-other part
came the sick little loner —
too proud, too cold, afraid — that's it —
afraid to admit need, too proud to take,
making giving a duty
instead of the need that giving is ...

In a burst Belief denied denying,
lapsing the Why
in full ascendancy of the Because,
not a matter of feeling good or bad
but just plain feeling —
feeling Feeling matter and Belief matter —
the reality of things, that things
are not just the words that name them.

It suddenly became important
to know specifics because suddenly
knowing became possible.
I stomped back and forth and yelled,
“Gawddamn, well, gawddamn!” and
mock pounded the table,
laughing and laughing my fool head off ...

Then I confidently put it
out of mind, sure that the knowledge of it
was real, that it was there in my brain
whenever I wanted it,
knowing exactly how things are done,
proud of my belief and the value
of doing them,
a new Concrete filling
the parts of me cut off:
An ear, my hair, a hand.

12-03-1974

Well, it's coming, I know,
The day that you go
Yes, it is.

It don't matter a lot
The reason you got —
The end's the end.

If it's — "All things must pass" — they will.
If it's — "Take pleasure where you can" — you will.
Well, it's coming, I know ...

01-??-1975

People come and go in your life
And you let them ...
I am one who needs to stay:
Being. Following. Going. Doing.

02-??-1975

On Monday I was fresh for you
On Tuesday I was determined to be fresh or you
On Wednesday I was tired over you
On Thursday I was mad at you
On Friday I was hurt by you
On Saturday I was indifferent to you
On Sunday I was wondering about you
On Monday I was fresh for you

A Parody

On Monday you hear it
On Tuesday you read it handwritten
On Wednesday you read it typed
On Thursday you read it Xeroxed
On Friday you read it parodied
On Saturday you read it ornate
On Sunday you do not read it

03-??-1975

I am primitive, baby.
The more civilized
The more is logic rigid
And perception distorted.
Zoning
There is no giving and taking —
It's all the same thing.

I go with you, baby, far out where the maps
Give out but where
The stars shine on and on.
Our pulses are bleeding flesh
Wrapped in barbed wire taboos.

I do not wait
So much as fantasize
Which is to say,
Living as though
At the same threshold,
A rent T-shirt showing
Unbroken under-flesh.

Come with me, baby
That I might pluck the red lily for thee.
Nothing is planned.
Each moment contains a destiny.
I live, I love — hey, baby of mine.

03-27-1975

How should I count the days since you've been gone?
By packs of cigarettes? By quarts of beer?
By books unread? By movies half unseen?
By letters written, letters unreceived?
By packs? By quarts? By bags of packs and quarts?

I flick a burst of ashes o'er my head,
Each bit of it a day's ascent — and plumb:
The haul of days, the rubble of conviction.

But day by day I struck my own departure
From nine parts of despair and one, resolve.
The ratio muddled, settled in my beer.
Despair enstaled and resolution closed:

I might have chosen many; I chose you.
For you contain the Many, One, and Few.

05-19-1975

Break into my reality.
It ought not to be strange to you.
It is no stranger you will meet there.
For my reality is you.
My reality also is me.
And you will see, you will see:
That neither am I a stranger.

06-09-1975

La Nouvelle Marseillaise

[To the tune of the real one]

Come on, you Children of the Universe,
The day of true joy has arrived!
We all have all it takes to be happy,
We can look at one another with wonder!
 We have! We need not take.
 We have! We need not make.
We are! We share! This life entire!
Rise up! To sing this day!

06-24-1975

I went to all the places we
 had talked about —

The feria at Oaxaca was
 less lively for me
 than we had expected;

the hammocks at Tehuantepec
 were dimmer of color
 and weaker of construction;

Puerto Escodido was
 quite *un*-hidden;

The volcanoes were outshone
 by the train's reading lights
 reflected in the windows;

The American hippies were
 only slightly less Ugly
 than their parents in their day.

I slept in camión stations
 and in flipback seats with
 metal rungs for arch supports —

On the way to all the places
 we might have been.

07-28-1975

It is never so far
that I can outrun
this flapjack horizon
expanse of earth.

This place or any other
is interchangeable, the other with the one,
The domain of my species is measured
in eyelengths to the sun.

My hair is my clothes and my adornment;
my voice is my music;
my hand is my friend and my helper;
my earth is my home

In my hair I am clothed and adorned;
by my voice do I sing myself;
through my hand I am befriended;
of my earth I am sheltered and nourished.

I am the universe and cannot escape myself.
The fact that I *am* is the barrier.

08-??-1975

You were my fling with your many things:
With mysticism, vitamins,
a little weed, less L. S. D.,
rustic clothes and old Ford vans,
communal meals and Welfare rolls,
how to talk and how to act,
I Ching, yoga, natural foods,
thumbing rides in Mexico,
long hair, beards, and wooden flutes.

08-??-1975

I dreamt a lovely thing once
and woke the more amazed
to find it in components
about me in easy reach
like the segments of ruined columns.

I laughed triumphantly.
It seemed an easy thing to
assemble the game of Life
into a Big Win.

Reality, too, seems ...

09-06-1975

Song

A body can't live alone, see,
So if you're not with me
You must gotta be
With somebody else —

And, uh, don't get me wrong —
Just so you know I'm the one
To be and to be and to be:
Yours —

09-??-1975

So this is how it ends.
This Siamese twinned entity-of-you-and-me
ends
in a tearing of flesh —

Was it-that-we-were
such a monster?
Is so unmerciful a wrenching apart
so very necessary?

Everything unto this raw pain
was ours as one,
but *your* pain
will numb you to your separate health,
for *your* portion enbargained
all the vital organs.

09-24-1975

Ubi sunt

Though formed to ease myself in friendship, friendships ease
and I am left, my chair perched on the precipice
of my porch, to watch patterns of smoke and late night crowds.

The people barely pause to look away, afraid
of missing an event that must lie around
the next corner — or —

With feet propped on a planter
I thinly breathe an arc of smoke beyond the glare
of headlamps, thinking, “I am dead,” and let my neck
recline my head upon the straight back of the chair.

My friends number the stars in a starless, starless night.

10-09-1975

I can stand more pleasure
 than you can,
I can stand more pain;

I can stand more guilt
 than you can,
I can stand more shame;

I understand more about life
 than you do —

Sirens shrieking
Faucets dripping
Wives forsaking
Friends making

Bellies shaking
Nipples nibbling
Deoderant sniffing
Image shifting

10-??-1975

Singing Self, the singing soars,
One contains the Many's cores,
Stumbling, sprinting through life's doors.
Praises rhyme my life with yours. 11-03-1975

Spokesmen of the Happy Few,
Blake, Stendhal, and Nietzsche knew:
Though all books be burned, perdu,
Honest men are born anew. 11-06-1975

Hotspur trod on Shakespeare's stage,
Dumb — but hearted — vital age.
Cocker spaniel is my sage,
My brave Hotspur barks in baige. 11-03-1975

Irish bards in ancient days
Sang for weddings lovely lays,
But when faced with lying ways
Wielded words like deadly rays. 11-08-1975

Causes call me from afar,
Each One part the Whole would mar.
Quarter given where balls are
Instigates the brain to war. 11-06-1975

Wordy Man names things with ease,
Turns himself to fit and please,
Names himself thereby to freeze
Pages turning in a breeze. 11-03-1975

Man has lived too long by schemes,
Thinking things and acting dreams.
The waking Glad Day daily beams.
Reality no more than seems. 11-06-1975

My friends lack heroic stuff,
They believe Romantic guff,
Not in Truth that, seen, is seen too tough,
Not in Love and Loyalty enough.

12-23-1975

If I told my friend that
The reason for a friend is that
Liking is loving as much as that,
Is there something wrong with that?

11-08-1975

Golden being, you want it all —
Stringless friendship, fruit that falls;
Playing the gallery, you don't call —
Weak eyes, weak jaws, weak knees, small balls.

11-05-1975

Dropped we from the Inner Space
Natural and perfect Grace,
Howling toward the Mundane; base —
Birth began the fall from Grace.

00-00-1975

People harden as they fallow
Older, longer on life's gallows,
Hanging Love that childhood hallows,
Even Milton once was callow.

11-02-1975

Doobied Love: A Poem

May I learn
to be with you
unobtrusively,
indeed, as One.

I am safe
with your vulnerability,
with the sight
of your body-shine —
ease be with us, I pray
our sunset-watch
our life-watch
free action be ours I pray —

delicate cycles
of glib chatter
and quiet repose
and of roots
and rootlessness,
and of action
and inaction.

Peace be ours in
the natural phenomena
of the drought of our emotions
and the deluge of our delusions,
the smiles of awareness
and trust
playing between us
throughout —

00-00-1976?

Lady of Mystery

Benched at a bus stop
The exact fare jingling in my palms.
The coins will tell. If they match, I can try.
They match. But coins. Filthy lucre.
What a cavalier — ha!
Stinking of sausage and dishwater and sweat —

Penetrate beneath my oafishness
For another onion skin of oaf.
I cannot speak — what can I say?
That I avoided profane loves waiting.
I am dull, so much the worse for me.
A traitor for love.

Wednesday, 07-28-1976, 0220

Eons ago
somebody ached
loneliness at
the marrow and
invented the shawl.

00-00-1976

Love is a cursed thing
to have known
when all that's left
is a dog to torture
with obscene scratching
and you don't know
whether to clutch it
with violent caresses
or to throttle it revengefully
for its pleasure

11-14-1976

Guarded and judgmental Jo-
Anne inspires folk to grow
Only if the line to toe
Limits Hamlet to what Horatio doth know.

10-31-1979

When love dies
you'd think that would
the stars fall,
the ocean tides arise,
a cataclysmic clap ka-room
 around the planet,
or a Caesar, Jesus, Kennedy, King
 be felled for being loved too well —
But no.

 When love dies
it flickers like the firelight
 in the sleepless wee hours;
it ticks relentless, wait-less time;
it hushes with the cessation
 of breeze-in-trees ...

Only sometimes does it
hiss,
furiously jangle,
or shriek uncomprehendingly
 like a babe rejecting
 a mother's tense and frigid teat.

01-11-1981